



# **“Building Communities Together”**

**A Networking Tool of HUD's Center for Community and Interfaith Partnerships**

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## **Building a Better Tomorrow**

The Department of Housing and Urban Development will be holding the **1999 Best Practices Symposium, July 20 - 24, at the Kansas City Convention Center in Kansas City, Missouri.**

This event, “Building a Better Tomorrow: Best Practices and Technical Assistance Symposium, will bring together HUD partners, including participants from federal, state and local governments, universities, community-based nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, other agencies and citizens to recognize “Best Practices” throughout the United States. These Best Practice Awards are the Academy Awards of our industry. In past years, HUD has had separate conferences featuring Best Practices from different program areas. This year projects from across the entire department will be honored.

The Center for Community and Interfaith Partnerships wants to be sure faith and community based organizations have a strong presence at the Best Practices Symposium. We encourage you to nominate projects you feel qualify as Best Practices as well as attend the symposium. If you nominate projects, you are encouraged to submit supporting documentation in

the form of videos and publications. Exhibits will be running concurrently with the symposium and will feature poster exhibits from Best Practices, booth exhibits, and a Cinema Showcase which will include videos of HUD and HUD's partners and projects.

The symposium offers a wonderful opportunity to share your experiences and learn from others who are creating the highest quality housing and community development programs in the country. As you listen to keynote speakers, attend workshops, mix and mingle with other participants, you will hear new ideas, get advice, share information, and benefit from the experiences of others who are making significant changes in their communities.

In addition, there will be specialized technical assistance for many programs including: consolidated planning, continuum of care, housing and FHA programs, and an update on

the implementation of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act with guidance on Public Housing Agency Plan implementation (including deconcentration strategies).

If your organization is interested in ex-  
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**The new deadline for nominations is May 28. Help us make sure community and faith-based organizations are recognized for their pioneering efforts in housing and community development.**

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hibiting at the symposium, fill out and submit the Exhibitor form at the web page below. You will receive all the information you will need to set up shop.

HUD anticipates some 3,000 partners and grantees to attend. Although there is no registration fee associated with this conference, hotel and travel costs are the responsibility of attendees.

For more information or for nomination forms, see the Building a Better Tomorrow web page at [www.hud.gov/bestpractices.html](http://www.hud.gov/bestpractices.html) or call 1-877-747-3861. Also, feel free to contact the Center for nomination forms.

## **Keeping You Connected**

The Center for Community and Interfaith Partnerships would like to thank you for your assistance in keeping our mailing list up to date and ensuring our faxes, letters and issues of “Building Communities Together” reach you. Also, we appreciate your continued support and guidance in the stories you are interesting in hearing. Please continue to offer ideas and feedback on what information is most useful.

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## HUD Secretary Calls for Social Justice

On March 31, Secretary Cuomo addressed nearly 750 community development practitioners and advocates at the Washington Policy Conference co-sponsored by the National Congress for Community Economic Development (NCCED) and the National Low-Income Housing Coalition. Attendees included non-profits, community development corporation directors and staff, public housing residents, local government and public housing agency officials, and community activists.

During a passion filled address the Secretary drove home his belief that only through a strong partnership belief that only through a strong partnership between community organizations

and local, state and federal government can we overcome poverty and bring true economic, social and racial justice to all communities. Secretary Cuomo recognized that neither local non-profits nor the federal government could sufficiently revitalize communities while acting alone.

While vowing to fight for every penny of the \$25 billion over 1999 levels that the President has proposed for HUD in fiscal year 2000, the Secretary urged attendees to intensify their efforts and invited them to partner with HUD with the goal of bringing social, racial, and economic justice to the communities not yet benefiting from the strong economy.

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## Important Resources

The Department of Housing and Urban Development is distributing more than 100,000 copies of "*Are You a Victim of Housing Discrimination?*" around the country to make it easy for people to file claims of illegal housing discrimination. The announcement is part of HUD's commemoration of Fair Housing Month in April.

Copies of the booklet have been distributed to HUD's 81 field offices around the country and are being made available to both public and private local fair housing groups.

Organizations or individuals who want the new brochure containing the discrimination form can contact HUD's Customer Service Center at 1-800-767-7468, or TTY 1-800-877-8339 Monday - Friday between 8 a.m. and 5:15 p.m. EST or fax requests to 202/708-2313. or look to the internet at [www.hud.gov/hdiscrim.html](http://www.hud.gov/hdiscrim.html) where the form can be filed electronically. People who believe they've been harmed by housing discrimination can also file claims with HUD by calling 1-800-669-9777 or TTY 1-800-927-9275.

Secretary Andrew Cuomo released a study on April 28, 1999 during an address at the National Press Club entitled "*Now Is The Time: Places Left Behind In The New Economy.*" This study reports on the state of communities still struggling in the slow lane of the Nation's remarkable economic recovery. This report focuses on a rarely seen dimension of that expansion-- cities likely to face long-term economic trouble if they are not able to address core problems now, during the current boom.

The report concludes that "America's economy offers the best opportunity in a generation" to help these communities now because of low unemployment, strong business growth, an aggressive urban agenda and the balanced federal budget created by Clinton Administration policies.

The report is available online at [www.hud.gov/news.html](http://www.hud.gov/news.html). Copies are also available by contacting the Center for Community and Interfaith Partnerships at 202/708-2404 or 1-800-308-0395.

## Featured Best Practice

**Bloomington, Indiana:** Created in FY 1992 to serve the housing needs of persons with disabilities, the **Home Modifications for Assisted Living (HMAL)** program allows participants to remain in their homes and delay or avoid institutionalization. The program has components for assessment of human service needs and advocacy assistance to enable the occupant to achieve or maintain independence. The city develops a need assessment for individuals and contracts for the construction work. A local service agency (Abilities Unlimited) assists with the human service needs of the household.

Since 1992, the HMAL program has provided assistance to 65 households with an average cost of about \$2500. This accomplishment has endeared the program to Bloomington residents. More than half of the assistance projects were completed in FY 96 and FY 97. In the 1998 program year, the program completed another 21 units in the community.

Bruce Jennings, program administrator, assures this program to be extremely simple to administer and easily duplicated in other communities. He will highlight HMAL at "Assisted Technologies in the Heartland," a conference on people with disabilities being held in Indianapolis the end of April '99 as well as the Indiana Governor's Conference on Aging in October '99. Bruce would be delighted to talk to other communities about establishing a similar program.

**Contact:** Bruce Jennings, Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development, (812) 349-3401, Fax: (812) 349-3582; [jenninbg@city.bloomington.in.us](mailto:jenninbg@city.bloomington.in.us)  
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*This information has been edited from the John J. Gunther Best Practices web page at <http://www.hud.gov/ptw/menu.html>*